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NOTES ON KANDYAN ART.

By A. K. COOMARASWAMY, D.Sc.

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NOTES ON KANDYAN ART.

By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY, D.Sc.

(With two Plates.)

CHANK IN THE MUSEUM AT KANDY.

THE Kandy Museum has lately acquired a very beautiful chank, mounted in damascened brass, and comparable with the fine specimen which is figured in "Mediæval Sinhalese Art," Pl. XLI., I. As in that case, the termination is in the form of a *serapendiya* head, and a continuation of the metal work runs round the mouth of the chank. The foliar scrolls proceeding from the animal's mouth are partly broken. The chank itself is plain, and not inlaid as in the other example. Like the other, it comes from Uda Nuwara ; in this case, from the Dewale at Lankatilaka. The other example was given by Narendra Sinha to a Dewale at Eldeniya (or Aludeniya ?), and it may be assumed that this specimen also is at least as old as the earlier part of the eighteenth century. It measures $10\frac{2}{5}$ inches in full length.

Plate B

CARVED POWDER HORN.

Mr. A. B. Casse Lebbe possesses a very fine carved Kandyan powder horn. The material is buffalo horn, and the delicate carving a fine example of *liya pata* work.

Plate A

WEIGHT OF A STOCK-DRILL.

When last in Ceylon I obtained a beautifully carved stock-drill (*torapanaya*) weight, elaborately carved in serpentine. This material is probably derived from the exposure near Ragalla, which was examined by Mr. Parsons, and is described in the Administration Report of the Mineralogical Survey for 1906. It is interesting to note that the carved weight shows signs of local abrasion, where it has evidently been rubbed down in recent times for medicinal purposes, as described in the report referred to.

Seen from above, the weight has a pentagonal section ; there is a ring of *pala peti* ornament round the bore, and below this are the five angular ornaments of *naga bandha* form ; below this again is a simpler form of *pala peti*, followed by several delicate mouldings. The total height of the weight is $3\frac{1}{8}$ in., the diameter of the bore is $\frac{3}{4}$ in. above and $\frac{7}{8}$ in. below. Other illustrations of

stock-drill weights from Ceylon will be found in "Mediæval Sinhalese Art," fig. 91, and in Mr. Parker's "Ancient Ceylon," figs. 240, 241.

The present specimen is said to have belonged to Devendra Mulacariya, and was obtained from one of his descendants.

PHOTOGRAPH OF A KANDYAN KENDIYA.

The accompanying photograph of a *kendiya* was taken some years ago by Messrs. Skeen & Co., and lately given to me by Mr. F. Skeen; the present whereabouts of the original is unknown. It represents a fine specimen, probably made in silver, and no doubt formerly the property of a Buddhist temple. It is scarcely distinguished in form from an ordinary *kotalaya*, except by the presence of a lid.

Plate A

FILIGREE AND OTHER BEADS.

The great variety of beautiful gold beads found in Kandyan jewellery, whether of local or Tamil origin, is very remarkable, and I illustrate here a selection, which should not, however, be regarded as exhausting all the varieties obtainable. All the principal types are known by name. Any filigree bead is *wayiramuni*; one with stars (No. 1) is called *taruka wayiramuni*, "star filigree bead"; one with dots (No. 16) is called *arimbu wayiramuni*, "dot filigree bead"; ~~one chased like No. 4 *arimbu surulu-wayiramuni* (but this appears to be an error, as this is not actually a filigree bead, but belongs to the other class).~~

Plate B

Beads other than filigree are called *bubul*. Ribbed varieties (Nos. 14, 19, and 21) are called *reli bubul*, "waved beads," or "undulated"; those with a sharp angle, diamond-shaped in section, are called *dippatan*, "two-faceted"; those chased (Nos. 3 and 7) are called *ketayan bubul*, "chased beads," or "cut beads"; those covered with dots, *arimbu bubul*, "dotted beads" (No. 5). All these are made in two halves, and soldered along the median line. They are, of course, hollow, and very light and delicate.

Another small Kandyan bead, not shown here, is the *gotamuni*, resembling a grain of rice in size and shape; these are made, not in two halves, but by rolling round a piece of thin gold of the requisite size upon itself.

The following are some names of gold necklaces, additional to those given in my "Mediæval Sinhalese Art." I should have been glad to illustrate some, but could not obtain permission to take the photographs of the jewellery at the Dalada Maligawa, from a list of which the names are taken. The names are: *muna-mal malaya*, *pusu-vandan malaya*, *hunu-vel malaya*, *dan-vel malaya*, *arimbu surul malaya*, *mohana malaya*, *sakra malaya*, *torapat sangili malaya*, *sinamuni malaya*. The previously recorded names, *peti malaya*,

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SPOLIA ZEYLANICA.

PLATE A.



KENDIYA.



POWDER HORN.

KANDYAN ART (A. K. COOMARASWAMY).

Benrose, Collo., Derby.

polmal malaya, and *gedi malaya*, also occur in the list.* It would be exceedingly interesting, and to local and European art students a very valuable thing, if the Ceylon Government would arrange to publish an adequately illustrated account of the Maligawa treasure, in co-operation with the temple authorities; it is a work which could hardly be accomplished in any other way.

I am indebted to Mr. T. B. Keppitipola for some of the above information; he is one of the few Kandyan chiefs who, at the present time, take an interest in the arts and legends of the Kandyans.

BO-LEAF AS A DECORATIVE MOTIF.

The well-known Sinhalese bo-leaf ornament, considered as a Buddhist symbol or decorative motif, is certainly of considerable antiquity in India and Ceylon. It appears probable, however, that the form belongs to that large class of ornamental motifs which, like the classical "acanthus," owe their name and later significance to an accidental resemblance in a form of quite different origin. General Beylié writes as follows on the bo-leaf of India:—

"Lanceolate ornament, or, more exactly, conventional leaf ornament, has had its own special history in each country, but particularly in Egypt, where we constantly meet with it on the tombs of Antinoë. It formed later the foundation of the decorative system of Musulman art (13th century) and by reaction of the figured work of Louis XIII. It is not impossible that the lanceolate ornament of the Musulman style, although of Assyrian and Egyptian origin, was only adopted in its ordinary form after having undergone a final transformation in the Indies. The leaf of *Ficus religiosa* appears as a nimbus in many statues of Buddha in memory of the sacred bo-tree under which he attained wisdom. We may anyhow regard it as certain that the temples of Cambodia (9th–12th centuries) and the palace of Angkor-Vat have never felt any other than Hindu and Chinese influence.

"We may add that the principal of the lanceolate or conventional leaf is not Indian, but Oriental, while the multi-lobed ornament, evidently of a leafy character, which appears to originate in Musulman art in the 13th century, on the belly of the vases of Mossul, is very probably of Hindu origin."

In other words, the bo-leaf form is of Assyrian or Egyptian origin—like the majority of motifs in decorative art, traced to their ultimate source—and was adopted as a Buddhist symbol in India,

* Another well-known form is the *siri-bo-malaya*, erroneously described as *Sri-bo-malaya* in the index to my "Mediæval Sinhalese Art," where it is illustrated (Plate XLIX., 5). This form comes mainly from the Galle District, and does not appear to be Kandyan.

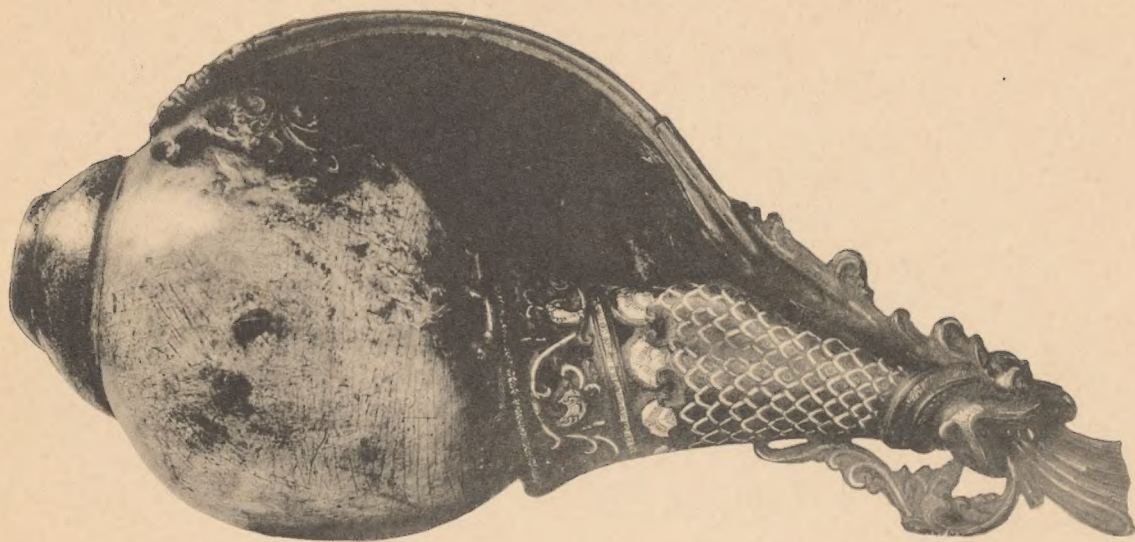
Other necklace names which I have heard are *kalamediri malaya* and *patteya malaya*. Another kind of bead is called *karawila eta*. It would be very advantageous if examples of all these named varieties could be exhibited in the Colombo Museum.

and then more deliberately based on the actual bo-leaf outline ; and this Indian type again influenced Musulman, and through Musulman, European types of ornaments.

Since writing the above, Mr. Keppitipola has kindly sent me a full list of the names of the beads illustrated. The names are as follows :—

1, *Arimbupeti wayiramuni* ; 2, *Arimbu wayiramuni* ; 3, 4, 7, *Ketayan bubul* ; 5, *Arimbu bubul* ; 6, *Silamuni* ; 8, *Murukasa wayiramuni* ; 9, *Surulu silamuni* ; 10, 15, *Murukasa arimbu wayiramuni* ; 11, *Wayiramuni* ; 12, 13, *Pattan arimbu bubul* ; 14, 18, 20, *Arimbu palakka* ; 16, *Surulu palakka* ; 17, *Dipattan bubul* ; 19, 21, 22, *Reli palakka*.

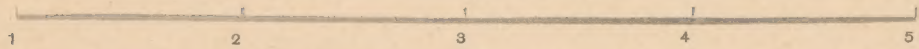
It will be seen that *wayiramuni* is the term applied to a filigree bead, *bubul* to a bead not of pierced or trellis work ; an ovoid or elongated bead is called *palakka*. The term *pattan* is used, as in gemming phraseology, to signify “ faceted.” *Arimbu* signifies a grain or dot.



BRASS MOUNTED CHANK.



GOLD BEADS.



(Inch scale for beads only.)

